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Peer and Recovery Services Programs, Planning, and Policy

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Background: Peer Support

- Peer support is defined as the process of giving and receiving encouragement and assistance to achieve long-term recovery.¹
- Peer specialists offer emotional support, share knowledge, teach skills, provide practical assistance, and connect people with resources, opportunities, communities of support, and other people.²



Sources: ¹U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2018). ²Value of Peers Infographic: General Peer Support. Solomon, P. (2004). Peer Support/Peer Provided Services Underlying Processes, Benefits, and Critical Ingredients. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 27(4), 392-401.



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Peer Specialist

- Uses lived experience, in addition to skills learned in formal training, to deliver strengths-based, person-centered services to promote a recipient's recovery and resiliency
- Provides recovery-oriented, person-centered, relationship-focused, and trauma-informed services
- Participates by choice





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Introduction

- House Bill 1486, 85th Legislature, Regular Session, 2017, authorized the creation of a new Medicaid benefit “Peer Services”



Peer Services



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- May include:
 - ▶ Recovery and wellness support
 - ▶ Mentoring
 - ▶ Advocacy
- May be provided individually or in a group setting
- Defined in [Texas Health and Human Services Commission Title 1, Part 15, Chapter 354, Subchapter N, Peer Specialist Services](#)



Peer Specialist Settings

- Local mental and behavioral health authorities
- Inpatient behavioral health organizations
- State hospitals
- Community-based recovery organizations
- Peer-run organizations
- Others



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Peer and Recovery Services Unit

- To support implementation of this legislation and highlight the importance of peer support, HHSC established the Peer and Recovery Services Programs, Planning, and Policy (PRSPPP) unit.

PRSPPP Unit

Vision

- A Texas where everyone can access peer and recovery support to achieve their ideal quality of life.

Mission

- To enhance the peer support workforce, strengthen and expand the capacity of peer and recovery services, and align data and research efforts.

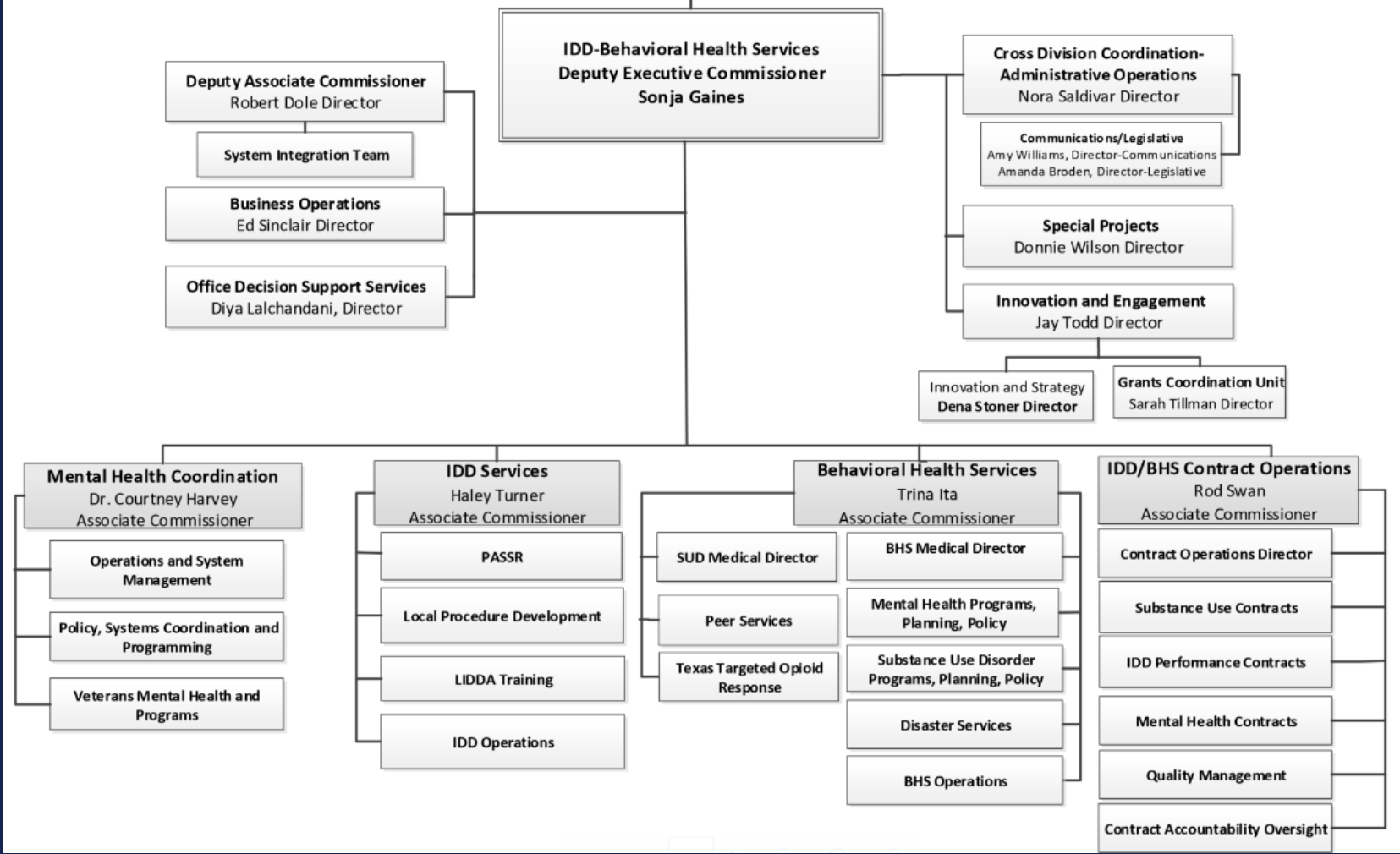
Goals

- Workforce development
- Services capacity expansion
- Data and research alignment



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Organizational Chart IDD-BHS/Peer Services





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PRSPPP: Services Capacity Expansion

- Recovery support services
- Youth recovery services
- Peer-run organizations
- Clubhouses
- Special projects





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PRSPPP: Data and Research Alignment

- University research partners
- Technical assistance alignment
- Contract strategy alignment
- Program development and strategic planning



PRSPPP: Workforce Development

- Curriculum development
- Certification administration
- Workforce development hub
- Stakeholder engagement



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Background

- Multiple credentials
- Stakeholder confusion
- Misaligned scope of practice
- Incompatible processes



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Consolidation

- Grandfathering
- Retired legacy credentials
- Aligned processes



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Peer Specialist Credentials 1 of 2

All credentials administered by the Texas Certification Board:

- Mental Health Peer Specialist (MHPS)
- Recovery Support Peer Specialist (RSPS)
- Peer Specialist Supervisor (PSS)
- Certified Family Partner (CFP)



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Peer Specialist Credentials 2 of 2

- “Intern” credential developed for those with barriers.
- Exceptions process for those with barriers
- Specializations



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Peer Specialist Qualifications

- Be a person with lived experience
- Be at least 18 years of age
- Have a high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma
- Be willing to appropriately share their story with recipients
- Be able to demonstrate self-directed recovery
- Pass background checks
- Complete training requirements



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Peer Specialist Certification Steps

1. Complete online self-assessment and orientation
2. Apply for training with a certified training entity
3. Complete the core and supplemental training
4. Complete background check*
5. Apply for initial six-month certification
6. Complete 250 hours supervised work experience
7. Receive two-year certification

* Provisional credential for some

Peer Specialist Initial Training

- Process
 - ▶ Six-hour core training
 - ▶ 46-hour supplemental training - specialized for type of lived experience, mental health condition, or substance use disorder
 - ▶ 250-hour work experience
 - ▶ Supervised (or co-supervised) by certified PSS
- Content
 - ▶ Service provision standards (state)
 - ▶ Core competencies (national)
 - ▶ Peer Specialist code of ethics (state)



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Peer Specialist Supervisor Role

- Focus on a peer specialist's provision of services
- Review of cases and activities
- Skill building
- Problem resolution
- Professional growth
- May also include aspects specific to the organization, such as following organizational policy or other administrative matters



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Peer Specialist Supervision

- Peer specialist supervision must occur:
 - ▶ Once weekly during initial six months;
 - ▶ Once monthly during full two-year certification; and
 - ▶ More frequently at the request of the peer specialist.
- Peer specialist supervision may:
 - ▶ Be provided individually or in a group setting;
 - ▶ Be provided face-to-face or via teleconference; or
 - ▶ Include observation of the peer specialist providing services.

Peer specialist supervision must be documented.



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Peer Specialist Supervisor Requisite Credentials

A peer specialist supervisor must be a:

- Qualified Credentialed Counselor (QCC)* or;
- Licensed Practitioner of the Healing Arts (LPHA)* or;
- Qualified Mental Health Professional-Community Services (QMHP-CS)* with a QCC or LPHA supervising the QMHP-CS or;
- Qualified Peer Supervisor (QPS) with a QCC or LPHA supervising the QPS.

*see TAC for more details



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Peer Specialist Supervisor Minimum Qualifications

A peer specialist supervisor must:

- Hold requisite credentials;
- Pass criminal history and registry checks;
- Meet the training requirements; and
- Be certified as a PSS.



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Support Hub - PeerForce

- Workforce development and support
- Guidance through the training and certification process
- Interactive website, www.peerforce.org
- Connection with supervision placements in their communities
- Continuing education postings
- Financial assistance for training, background checks, and fees (limited)
- Information resource library page
- Job postings board
- Peer community online forums



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Additional Resources

PeerForce website
www.peerforce.org

TCB website
www.tcbap.org

HHS website
www.hhs.texas.gov



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Thank you

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